

~~Top Secret~~

YUGOSLAVIA: New Hardline Communist Party

Ideologically orthodox military leaders and hardline civilians this week launched the League of Communists-Movement for Yugoslavia, a new party aimed at preserving Yugoslav unity. The lead speaker at the founding session said vaguely but ominously that the party will take Yugoslavia's fate into its own hands in alliance with prounity forces throughout the country. Party leaders charge Yugoslavia is becoming an economic and political colony—presumably of the West—and claim Communism is still historically inevitable. The party plans to field candidates in federal elections. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The new party may be meant to lay the political groundwork for a coup or a martial law regime, although fears that the conscript armed forces would split along ethnic lines are still a strong deterrent. Regardless of the readiness of the generals to act, jittery Croatian and Slovenian leaders are likely to interpret the party as a menace. The party does not appear connected to Serbian strongman Milosevic, and many senior military officers probably view him as a major threat to unity. In the short term, the party will block Prime Minister Markovic's plans to de-Communize the military. [REDACTED]

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